

Office of the Deaf & Hard of Hearing

Community Review

Washington State Department of Social and Health Services

WINTER 2007
Volume 4, Number 1



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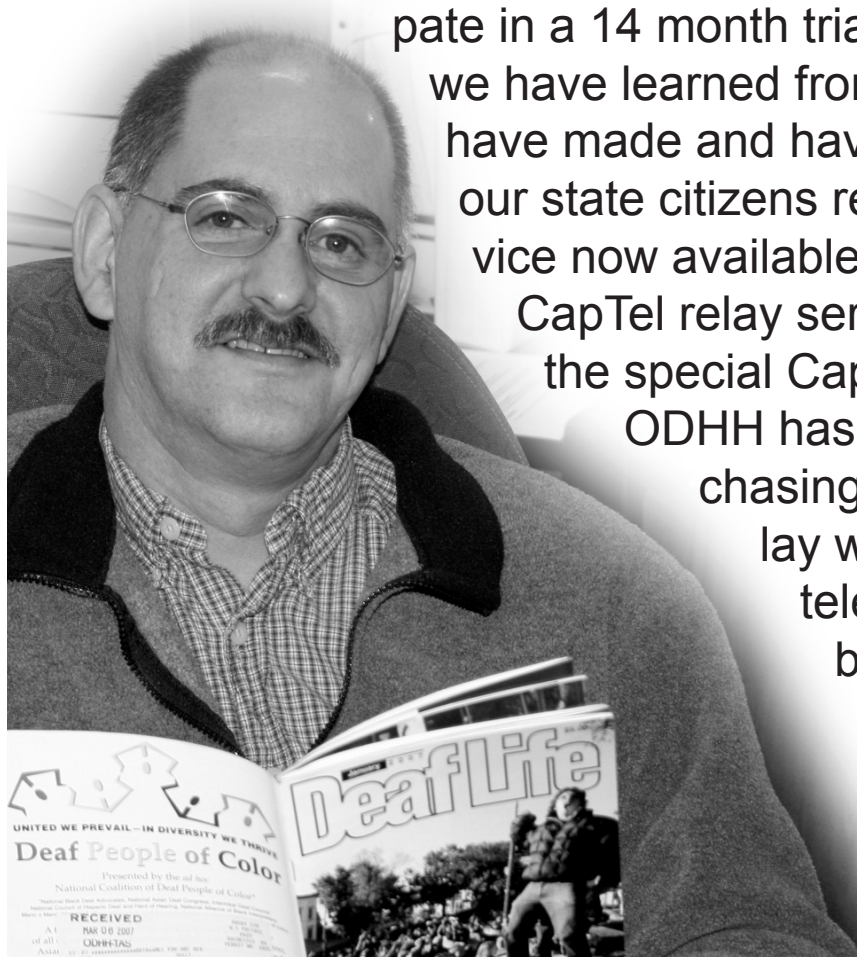
Message from the Director

Eric Raff, Director ODHHS

I am pleased to announce that captioned telephone (“CapTel”) will be provided this April as part of the Washington Relay Service, earlier than the July 2007 date previously announced. This telephone service will benefit those who can speak for themselves but cannot hear on the telephone. ODHHS was one of the first states to participate in a 14 month trial with 200 users. Since then, we have learned from the mistakes other states have made and have taken steps to ensure that our state citizens receive the best CapTel service now available.

CapTel relay service cannot work without the special CapTel telephone equipment.

ODHHS has successfully negotiated purchasing agreements for Cap Tel Relay with Sprint-Nextel and for the telephone equipment with Weibrecht Communications Inc. (WCI). We have been working internally within DSHS and with our equipment distribution program



trainers in preparation for this new addition to services available through the Office of Deaf and Hard of Hearing.

Availability of CapTel will be limited to minimize the fiscal impact due to limited funding. A total of 720 CapTel telephones will be available through June 30, 2008. ODHH will review CapTel telephone purchase levels annually to make sure CapTel relay service can be affordable over the long-term. This may either increase or decrease the number of CapTel telephones distributed annually.

As Director, I personally wanted to make sure that the distribution of CapTel is a fair process under the current administrative rules. For example, distribution will be based on a first come, first served basis. This means everyone should be informed of this opportunity at the same time, not a select few. To ensure the most appropriate equipment is provided, CapTel applicants will go through a screening process to determine which specialized equipment meets their telecommunication needs. This will help ODHH maintain a balance between those who need the CapTel phone and the limited number available. However, we will always strive to promote access to telecommunication barriers through the use of available telephone technologies

For more information about CapTel, look inside this newsletter.

Advisory Committee Meetings

You are invited to attend and watch the Advisory Committee meetings.

WHEN: Saturday, March 31st, 2007

TIME: 9:00 AM – 5:00 PM

WHERE: Radison Hotel Gateway
18118 Pacific Hwy. South
SeaTac WA 98188

Parking is free!

Future Meeting Dates are tentatively scheduled in Sea-Tac for:

- Saturday, May 19th, 2007
- Saturday, September 15th, 2007
- Saturday, November 17th, 2007

The ODHHS Advisory Committee Welcomes Robert (Bob) Roberts

I live in Veradale, WA (west of Spokane). I am a retired-small business owner. I am hard of hearing as a result of working in the construction field for 40 years and 31 years in the military reserves.

I represent the hard of hearing community. I am involved with the State Rehabilitation Council and State Independent Living Council. I have been on many boards and committees and bring a wide variety of experience. I am looking forward to creating a liaison between ODHHS, deaf, deaf-blind and hard of hearing individuals, business and labor organizations and these councils so that positive changes can happen in the system for the deaf, deaf-blind and hard of hearing individuals. I look forward to working with the ODHHS to help make changes happen.



Sign Language Interpreter Management (SLIM) Program Updates

By Emily Hill

Welcome to 2007!

This year will have some exciting developments in the Sign Language Interpreter Management (SLIM) Program, especially in regard to the interpreter contract. This contract ensures that interpreting services are provided to DSHS clients, customers, and employees who are deaf, hard of hearing, or deafblind.

In July 2005, ODHH took over management of the sign language interpreter contract from General Administration (GA), another department within the State of Washington. Because of ODHH's staff knowledge of Deaf culture, interpreters, and the needs of our clients and DSHS employees, the move was a valuable one for DSHS, many interpreters, and the Deaf community. On June 30, 2007, the current interpreter contract will expire. We must have a new contract in place for interpreters and interpreter referral agencies to start work on July 1. We're currently working on development of that contract. The SLIM Program is dedicated to providing a mutually beneficial contract for all involved in the provision of sign language interpreter services within the state of Washington.

Many of you may have received interpreting services through current or past DSHS interpreter contracts. Hopefully, this next year will show that we are improving services to everyone we serve.

Our goal is to have the Request for Qualifications and Quotations (RFQQ) ready for the public around March 12. If you are interested in bidding for the next contract, please watch the following website for updates: <http://www1.dshs.wa.gov/MSA/CCS/index.htm>

Washington State is pleased to announce the arrival of Captioned Telephone (CapTel) as part of the Telecommunication Equipment Distribution (TED) Program and Telecommunication Relay Service (TRS)

Service is scheduled to begin on April 2, 2007!

My daughter thought I was losing my mind.
I was losing my hearing.

The other day I was talking with my daughter on the phone who lives on the other side of the country. When I asked her what she had been up to lately. She exclaimed, "I've been fainting from stress!"

Oh my goodness! My heart began pounding as I bombarded her with questions, "have you seen a doctor?"

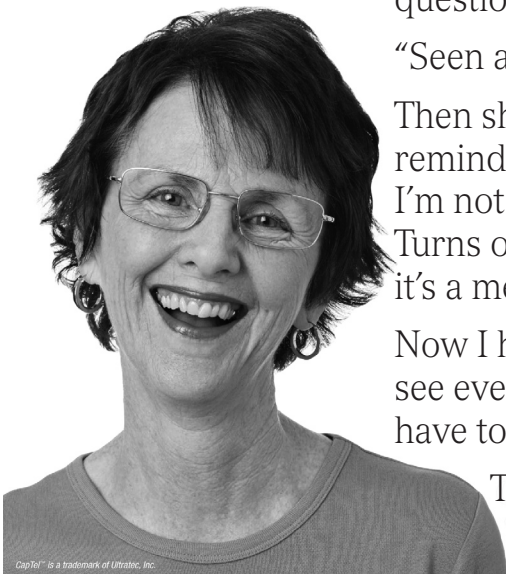
"Seen a Doctor," she replied confused, "for painting?"

Then she asked if I'm feeling okay. I promptly reminded her that I'm not the one to worry about. I'm not the one fainting from stress!

Turns out she said, "I've been painting, it's a mess."

Now I have a CapTel™ phone and I can see every word right on the phone. I won't have to be embarrassed like that again.

Thank you CapTel.



Call 1-800-422-7930 V/TTY

or email us at ODHH@dshs.wa.gov today to see if you qualify and get back to using the phone again.

What is a CapTel Phone?

CapTel is a new telephone technology that allows people to receive captioning of their telephone conversations, much like captioned television. The CapTel phone looks and works like any other traditional phone with callers talking and listening to each other, but with one very significant difference - captions are provided live for each phone call. The captions are displayed on the phone's built-in screen so the user can read the words while listening to the voice of the other party.



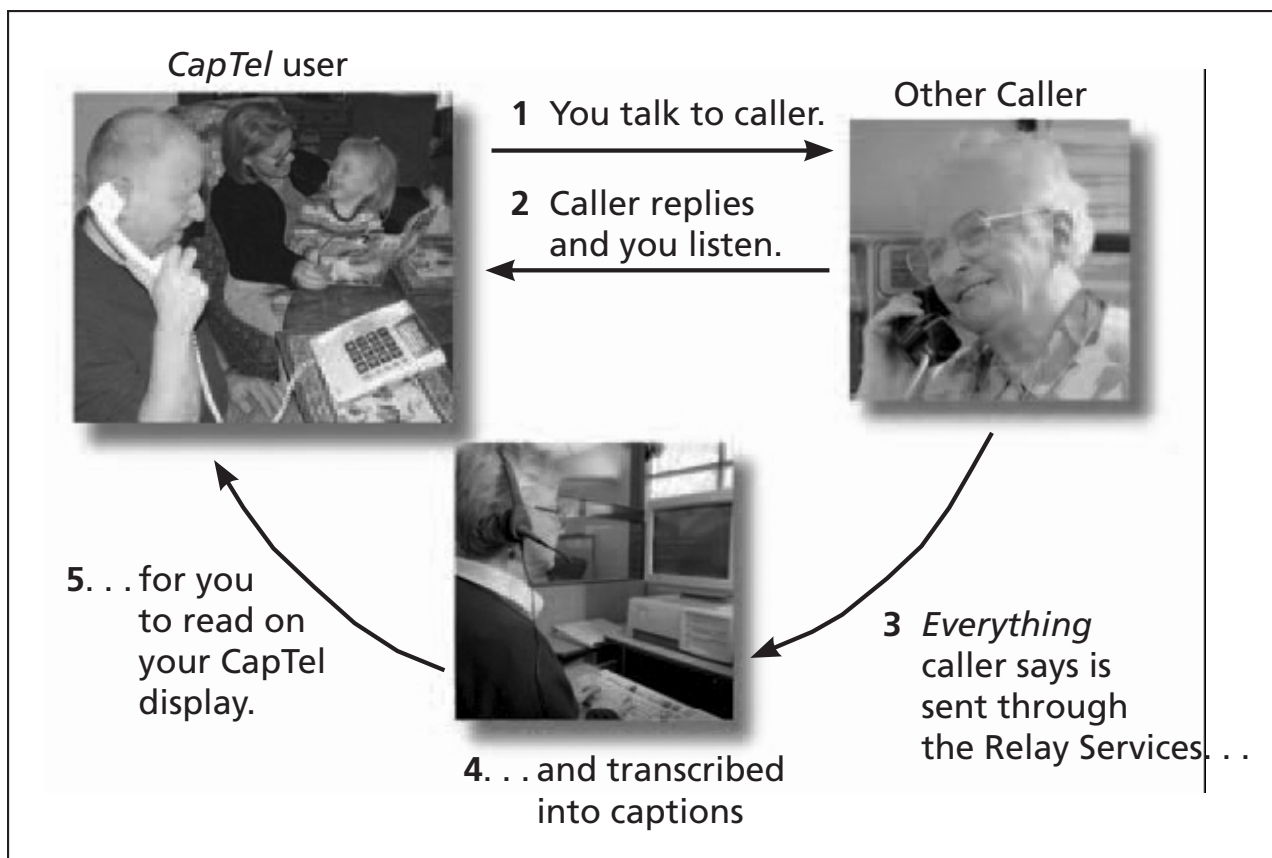
For individuals with low vision, the CapTel USB™ may meet his or her needs. Large-print captions can be viewed on a computer monitor by connecting the CapTel USB™ directly to the individual's computer*. Enjoy large screen captions throughout your CapTel USB™ phone conversations! For system requirements contact ODHH TED Program.



*Computer and monitor not provided by TED Program.

How does CapTel work?

CapTel phone users place a call in the same way they place a call on any traditional phone by dialing the phone number of the person they are trying to contact. The CapTel phone automatically routes the call through a captioning service with specially trained operators who caption the call using voice recognition software. When the other party answers the call, the CapTel user will hear that person's voice as well as read what is being said on the CapTel screen.



Who can receive a CapTel phone?

Washington residents who have a severe to profound hearing loss are eligible to apply for a CapTel phone. Because there are a limited number of CapTel phones available, applicants will be screened to determine which device will best meet each individual's telecommunication needs. Some individuals will be able to utilize a high powered amplified telephone that is also provided through the TED program.

How can I apply for a CapTel phone?

Washington residents who are interested in applying for a CapTel phone must submit the “CapTel Supplemental Application” (DSHS form 14-487). To receive the application, contact the Telecommunication Equipment Distribution (TED) Program at 1-800-422-7930 or visit us online at <http://www1.dshs.wa.gov/hrsa/odhh/ted.shtml>

The supplemental application must be submitted with the standard Application for Telecommunication Equipment (DSHS form 14-264).



Federal CapTel Program

For more information, contact:
Federal CapTel Customer Service
888-269-7477 V or 800-482-2424 TTY
www.captionedtelephone.com

CapTel service by Federal Relay is available in all fifty states and District of Columbia, for qualifying active and retired Federal employees (Civilian and DOD), veterans, and U.S. Tribal members.

Sprint is distributing a limited number of free Federal CapTel phones each month (subject to change at any time). To obtain a free Federal **CapTel** phone, complete the appropriate application form.

You may be eligible for a **FREE CapTel** phone through the Federal CapTel Program if you have a hearing loss and one of the following:

- are a Federal Civilian or Military Employee (active or retired).
- are a veteran.
- are a U.S. tribal member.

NOTE: Spouse, siblings or children of federal (active or retired) personnel, veteran or U.S. Tribal member, are not eligible.

The Deaf-Blind Service Center Pilots Communication Facilitator (CF) Services

In a pilot project sponsored by ODHHS, the Deaf-Blind Service Center (DBSC) is developing a new service that enables a severely or fully deaf-blind person to obtain access to video phone (VP) calls using a communication facilitator (CF). The CF service enables a deaf-blind person to enjoy the benefit of using the nationwide Video Relay Services (VRS) and to make person to person (P2P) video calls. The CF service copies the signs shown by the video interpreter (VI) through a CF to those unable to see the video screen or read visual ASL. The video calls can be made using any of the following communication modes: tactile, close vision and other preferred communication modes that will enable deaf-blind video users to successfully communicate using the VP system.

The CF program includes deaf-blind consumer training on how to use the CF program and process VRS and P2P video calls. The training also includes information on the role and responsibility of the CF who facilitates the video call between the deaf-blind person and the preferred video call mode. DBSC will be using both a Sorenson and D-Link VP which are set up within the DBSC facility located at 1620 18th Ave, Suite 200, Seattle, WA 98122 for all deaf-blind persons to come in and process a video call with or without the CF services.

While DBSC is in the early stages of the CF service development they are hoping to have CF services available to client by April 1, 2007. If you are interested in more information regarding the CF services at DBSC, please contact DBSC by email: info@seattledbcs.org or call them through TTY at 206-323-9178.

Do you need ODHH publications in other reading formats or in a foreign language?

Information, Referral and Advocacy Updates

By Ryan Bondroff

ODHH can provide ODHH-related program information in Large Print or Braille format or in a foreign language.

Large Print and Braille Format:

We have new large print brochures on ODHH and Telecommunication Equipment Distribution. For people who request Braille materials, we can provide those brochures and other ODHH related materials as well.

Foreign Language Format:

If you prefer to read ODHH materials in a foreign language such as Spanish, Russian, Chinese, French, etc. We can have ODHH materials translated in any language that meet your language needs.

Please contact Ryan Bondroff to request materials in your preferred foreign language or reading format (large print or Braille) via email at: bondroffryan@dshs.wa.gov or call 1-(800) 422-7930. You can also use Videophone (VP) to contact ODHH. We will complete your request and mail the materials to you.

Back Issues of ODHH Community Review

Office of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing has back issues available for anyone who is interested in receiving them. Please contact ODHH at (800) 422-7930 V/TTY or email ODHH@dshs.wa.gov to let us know which newsletter and how many copies you need. We'll be happy to send you those newsletters.

List of Back Issues:

1. Spring 2004, Volume 1, Number 1
2. Fall 2004, Volume 1, Number 2
3. Winter 2005, Volume 2, Number 1
4. Summer 2005, Volume 2, Number 2
5. Fall 2005, Volume 2, Number 3 – Regular and Large Print available
6. Winter 2006, Volume 3, Number 1
7. Summer 2006, Volume 3, Number 2
8. Fall 2006, Volume 3, Number 3



Curious about Cochlear Implants?

Credit: NIH Medical Arts - Ear with Cochlear implant.

What is a cochlear implant?

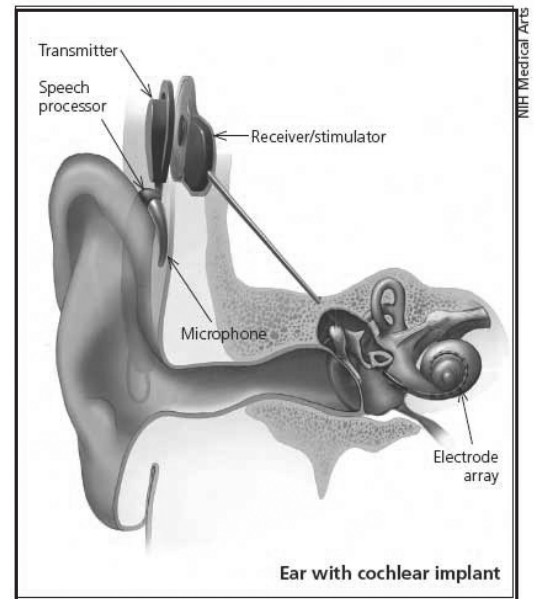
A cochlear implant is a small, complex electronic device that can help to provide a sense of sound to a person who is profoundly deaf or severely hard-of-hearing. The implant consists of an external portion that sits behind the ear and a second portion that is surgically placed under the skin (see figure).

An implant does not restore normal hearing. Instead, it can

give a deaf or hard of hearing person a useful representation of sounds in the environment and help him or her understand speech.

How does a cochlear implant work?

Hearing aids amplify sounds so they may be detected by damaged ears. A cochlear implant is very different from a hearing aid. Cochlear implants bypass damaged portions of the ear and directly stimulate the auditory nerve. It allows many people to recognize warning signals, understand other sounds in the environment, and enjoy a conversation in person or by telephone.



Who gets cochlear implants?

Adults who have lost all or most of their hearing later in life can often benefit from cochlear implants. They often associate the sounds made through an implant with sounds they remember. This may help individuals to understand speech without visual cues or systems such as lip-reading or sign language.

Cochlear implants, coupled with intensive post-implantation therapy, can help young children to acquire speech, language, developmental, and social skills. Most children who receive implants are between two and six years old. Early implantation provides exposure to sounds that can be helpful during the critical period when children learn speech and language skills. In 2000, the FDA lowered the age of eligibility to 12 months for one type of cochlear implant.

Children and adults who are deaf or severely hard-of-hearing can be fitted for cochlear implants. According to the Food and Drug Administration's (FDA's) 2005 data, nearly 100,000 people worldwide have received implants. In the United States, roughly 22,000 adults and nearly 15,000 children have received them.

How does someone receive a cochlear implant?

Use of a cochlear implant requires both a surgical procedure and significant therapy to learn or relearn the sense of hearing. Not everyone performs at the same level with this device. The decision to receive an implant should involve discussions with medical specialists, including an experienced cochlear-implant surgeon. Prior to implantation, many factors need to be considered. The process can be expensive. For example, a person's health insurance may cover the expense, but not always. Surgical implantations are almost always safe, although complications are a risk factor, just as with any kind of surgery. An additional consideration is learning to interpret the sounds created by an implant. This process takes time and practice. Speech-language pathologists and audiologists are frequently involved in this learning process.

Steps to an implant

- Physician (usually an ear, nose, and throat doctor) refers patient for evaluation.
- Trained implant audiologist tests patient's hearing.
- Patient examined for surgery.
- If patient found qualified, implant device is chosen.

- Surgery performed to insert implant, usually as out-patient.
- Incision heals (usually several weeks' time required).
- Patient receives processor and gets "turned on."
- Auditory therapy as needed to familiarize patient with "new" implant sounds.

(Information from the National Institute on Deafness and Other Communication Disorders (NIDCD) web site: <http://www.nidcd.nih.gov/health/hearing/coch.asp>)

You may be a cochlear implant candidate if...

- You have trouble following conversations, even in a quiet room.
- You have difficulty using the telephone or cannot use it at all.
- You rely upon lip reading for speech comprehension.
- You avoid social activities because you can't understand.
- You watch captioned TV.

Note: This assumes you wear appropriately-fitted hearing aids. Seek a second opinion at an implant center if your hearing health provider tells you that you do not qualify, and you think you do. Only an implant audiologist can determine that.

Adapted From: Hearing Loss Association of Washington Newsletter, Winter 2007

Regional Service Centers Contact Information

Hearing Speech and Deafness Center-Bellingham (HSDC)

Covers: San Juan, Island, Skagit and Whatcom counties

Toll-free: 866-647-0910 V/TTY

Website: www.hsdhc.org

Hearing Speech and Deafness Center-Seattle (HSDC)

Covers: King, Snohomish, Jefferson, and Clallam counties

Toll-free: 800-761-2821 V/TTY

Website: www.hsdhc.org

Hearing Speech and Deafness -Tacoma (HSDC)

Covers: Pierce, Thurston, Grays Harbor, Mason & Kitsap counties

Toll-free: 866-698-1748 V/TTY

Website: www.hsdhc.org

SW Washington Service Center for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (SWCDHH)

Covers: Clark, Skamania, Lewis, Pacific, Cowlitz and Wahkiakum counties

Toll-free: 866-695-6777

Website: www.swcdhh.org

SE Washington Service Center for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (SEWSCDHH) - Pasco

Covers: Benton, Franklin, Walla Walla, Columbia, Asotin, Garfield and Adams counties

Toll-free: 888-543-6598

Website: www.sewscdhh.org

SE Washington Service Center for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (SEWSCDHH) - Yakima

Covers: Yakima, Kittitas and Klickitat counties

Voice: (509) 469-1845, TTY: (509) 469-1847

Website: www.sewscdhh.org

Eastern Washington Center for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (EWCDHH) - Spokane

Covers: Okanogan, Douglas, Lincoln, Ferry, Chelan, Pend Oreille, Stevens, Spokane, Whitman, and Grant counties

Toll-free: 800-214-3323

Website: www.ewcdhh.org

New ODHH Website Updates Now Available

By Brian Clark

Visit ODHH Online at <http://odhh.dshs.wa.gov>

- ***Public Service Announcement:
Don't Hang Up!***
<http://odhh.dshs.wa.gov>
Watch the Don't Hang Up! Public Service Announcement on the ODHH homepage. Simply click on the appropriate viewer, Real Media or Windows Media, to view the PSA.
- ***ODHH Newsletters, Brochures, & Other Publications***
<http://www1.dshs.wa.gov/hrsa/odhh/resour.shtml>
In addition to community resources, ODHH brochures and Newsletters (2004-Present) are available online. Most publications are available in Large Print (if not, please contact ODHH to request a copy in Large Print). All publications can be viewed and printed online.
- ***Telecommunication Equipment Distribution (TED) webpage***
<http://www1.dshs.wa.gov/hrsa/odhh/ted.shtml>
A new webpage was added with information about the TED program, including eligibility requirements, pictures and descriptions of equipment and equipment user guides, as well as links to forms like the TED Application (DSHS Form 14-264). You can apply for TED equipment simply by printing and filling out the form, then sending it to the ODHH/TED office.

Staff Updates

There are some new and exciting changes that have happened at ODHH. We are happy to share the updates with all of you.

Jennifer Chowning was promoted to Program Support for 3 programs which are: Assistive Communication Technology (ACT), Telecommunication Equipment Distribution (TED) and Telecommunication Relay Services (TRS).



ODHH is currently recruiting and interviewing for:

- Office Assistant 3
- Information Technology Specialist 3
- Information Technology Specialist 5

Interested applicants may apply online at <http://careers.wa.gov/>

Introducing: Sue Campbell, President - Hearing Loss Association of Washington

ODHH is proud to introduce the most recent President of Hearing Loss Association-Washington Chapter (HLA-WA). Sue Campbell has been a long-time contractor with ODHH, providing equipment and training to hard of hearing clients of ODHH's Telecommunications Equipment Distribution (TED) Program.

In 1984, Sue Campbell's audiologist informed her that he was involved in a hard-of-hearing group and felt it would be a good group for her to be in. This group called itself SHHH, short for 'Self Help for the Hard of Hearing People'. At that time, Sue attended school and was the full support provider for her family, as her

husband was very ill. She also had three children living at home.

By 1989, when she finally had some extra time, the two SHHH Chapter groups that she was aware of had disbanded. It wasn't until 1992 that she heard of a group that met in Auburn. This group called themselves 'South King County Chapter.' Right from the start she knew that she needed this group. These people understood what it was like to be hard-of-hearing. Since then, she has thoroughly enjoyed attending the SHHH (now known as Hearing Loss Association of America) National Conventions over the years with her HOH friends. She has increased her knowledge and has seen many positive changes for hard of hearing people.

In late 1998, Sue joined the local Lions Club (in 1925, Helen Keller challenged the Lions Club and today, the Lions Club Sight and Hearing Projects are very important programs offered by the Lions). The Northwest Lions Foundation for Sight and Hearing (NLFSH) is home to the world's largest Corneal Transplant Tissue program and the Audient and rebuilt hearing aid programs that help many people who are unable to afford hearing aids. Since she joined, Sue has held several positions, including President. Currently she is the Zone Chairperson and her club's Hearing Chair.

In 2004 Sue helped start a group in Renton but stepped down when elected to her one-year term as HLAA-WA President. Sue has held several positions within SHHH, including being President for three years. Sue has chaired the SHHH/ HLAA-WA newsletter Sound Waves committee since 1998, working with Penny Allen, who now serves as Editor.

Sue would like ODHH Newsletter readers to please consider donating their hearing aids so that others may also live life to the fullest.

Note: Sue loves her job as a contractor for ODHH's TED program, delivering amplified telephones and helpful information to TED's hard of hearing clients.

Problems Calling 2-1-1 Information Services?

By Ryan Bondroff

In the Spring 2006 edition of the ODHH newsletter, readers were introduced to the telephone number 2-1-1. Some readers may have experienced difficulty using the number when dialing 211 directly from a TTY or through the relay services.

Briefly, 2-1-1 is a quick and easy way for callers to get information about health and human services. Professional information and referral specialists work with callers to assess needs, determine options, and the best course of action, then direct the caller to the appropriate programs/services, provide culturally appropriate support, intervene in crisis situations, and advocate for the caller as needed.

Due to technical issues, 2-1-1 does not connect with users dialing 2-1-1 through the relay service. Users calling 2-1-1 through the relay service may experience difficulties. This is because the 2-1-1 system is operated by a detection system that identifies the origination point of the call and handles it as an area-specific information request. The origination point of the call determines the link to the service directory from which information is provided. For example, if a caller dialed 2-1-1 from Olympia, he or she would be connected to a 2-1-1 resource network for the Olympia area. The reason Telecommunication Relay Services (TRS) cannot process 2-1-1 calls is because Sprint provides relay services to Washington callers from relay centers located out of state. This prevents 211 from accepting the call. However, relay callers can connect with 2-1-1 by providing the relay operator with the 10-digit area-specific number (listed below).

Also, TTY users cannot directly reach 211 services by dialing the 211 number because 2-1-1 operates using a voice automated system, TTY users will not be connected with a representative. The

same solution that works for relay callers will work for direct calling TTY users. TTY users can reach 211 using the same 10-digit area-specific TTY number (listed below).

On the following page is contact information for local 2-1-1 Washington State General Information and Referral Service centers. All users can connect to 2-1-1 by dialing the appropriate number. Some centers have TTY numbers listed.

For more information, please visit: 2-1-1 online at www.win211.org. For other information, please e-mail: ODHH at odhh@dshs.wa.gov.

Washington State General Information and Referral Services

For information about Health and Human Services contact the following organizations:

North Sound 2-1-1

(Skagit, Snohomish, Whatcom, San Juan and Island Counties)

(800) 223-8145, TTY(800) 846-8517

In Everett (425) 258-4227

Available M-F 8:00 am - 5:00pm

Served by Volunteers of America of Western.

Web site: www.voaww.org

King County 2-1-1

2-1-1 Community Information Line – 24/7

(effective January 1, 2007)

2-1-1 or 206-461-3200 or 800-621-4636 or TTY: 206-461-3610

Community Resources Online: www.crisisclinic.org

24-Hour Crisis Line

206-461-3222 or 866-4CRISIS (866-427-4747) or

TTY: 206-461-3219

Clallam, Kitsap & Jefferson Counties

Comprehensive information and referral for health & human services:

(360) 415-5892 or (800) 627-0335

Web site: www.crisisclinicofthepeninsulas.org

www.unitedwayinfo.org

Crisis Clinic of the Peninsulas/Kitsap County

360-479-3033

1-800-843-4793*

*Only for those within Kitsap County and outside of the local dialing area.

Clallam Crisis & Mental Health services

24 - Hour Telephone Crisis Services

(360)452-4500

Jefferson County Crisis & Mental Health services

24 - Hour Telephone Crisis Services

(360)385-0321, (800)659-0321

Thurston, Lewis & Mason Counties

Crisis & Information Line: (360) 586-2800

24/7 service through Crisis Clinic Resource Network in Olympia.

Online database of resources: www.crisis-clinic.org Click on link to "Information and Referral"

Western Counties 2-1-1

(Serving Thurston, Mason, Grays Harbor, Lewis and Pacific Counties)

Judi Hoefling, Director

3857 Martin Way East

Olympia, WA 98506

M-F 8am-5pm

360-586-2888

Pierce County 2-1-1

United Way of Pierce County Helpline

Dial 2-1-1, or 800.572.HELP or 800-572-4357

253-572-4357 in Pierce County

Available Monday - Friday, 8:00am - 5:00pm

Online database of resources: www.uwpc.org/

SouthWest Washington 2-1-1

(Serving Clark, Cowlitz, Wahkiakum and Skamania Counties)

211info

Dial 2-1-1, or 1-877-501-0252

Available 7 days, 7:00 am – 8:00 pm

Website: www.211info.org

Greater Columbia Region 2-1-1

Dial 2-1-1, or

Toll Free (877)-211-9274 or

Toll Free (877)-211-5445

Available Monday - Friday, 7 AM - 6 PM

Web site: <http://www.pfp.org>

Spokane Region 2-1-1

(Serving Spokane, Stevens, Ferry and Pend Oreille Counties)

Dial 2-1-1

Available Monday – Friday, 8 AM - 5 PM

First Call For Help: 509-838-4428

Regional Service Center Update

By Claudia Foy, Social and Human Services Program Manager

What are the Regional Service Centers?

ODHH contracts with seven non-profit Regional Service Centers for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (RSC) to provide free services such as community support, advocacy, and information and referral (I & R) to individuals, interpreters, service providers, and businesses. Individuals can receive services at a local RSC by calling their toll free (800) number, sending an e-mail, via video phone, through a walk-in meeting or via appointment.

Most Commonly Used Service Provided by the Centers

The most used service provided by Centers in 2005-2006 was I & R. Many individuals and businesses contacted the centers for information relating to deafness, hearing loss, and communication access. Through I & R, Centers helped the people use community-based resources and improve communication access to those community programs and services.

Most Commonly Requested Information

Over the past year, the Centers have collected information to identify the most commonly requested information and have identified the top three: interpreters, assistive technology, and telecommunication equipment. Let's go through last year's I & R data collected for RSC.

1. Interpreters:

The American Disabilities Act of 1990 has provided challenges for businesses and professionals in providing accommodations to the deaf, hard of hearing and deaf blind. When a deaf person

contacts a doctor, dentist or businesses, they sometimes request such professionals or business to obtain an interpreter for their appointment. Such professionals and businesses then contact RSC for information on obtaining an interpreter. Additionally, anyone, including clients, professional and businesses, may contact RSC for education and training regarding obtaining an interpreter.

Practicing and prospective interpreters also contact Centers for information regarding training and professional workshops available in their region. They also may ask RSC provide training to improve their skills in the profession.

2. Assistive Technology:

The challenges people face in getting and using assistive technologies primarily are related to cost and availability. Hearing aids are costly; some TV programs and movies are not captioned and some rental homes do not have visual fire alarms. Centers have handouts, brochures and directories to assist consumers receiving assistive technology, including a list of places that provide free and low cost hearing aids.

3. Telecommunication Equipment:

When people lose their hearing, one of the few things they miss is their opportunity to talk on the phone with their family and friends. Many people contacted Centers to learn more about free or low-cost telecommunication equipment, such as amplified telephones, TTYs, or other telephones with features tailor to meet the unique communication needs of individuals with hearing loss. The Centers refer callers to ODHH's Telecommunication Equipment Distribution (TED) program distributes specialized equipment to individuals with hearing loss and speech impairment.

ODHH and Centers have partnered to provide information and referral to empower individuals and families to live as effectively and independently as possible. More importantly, ODHH and RSC continue to identify communication trends and update I & R resources frequently. To learn more information about services or topics relating to hearing loss, contact your local service center. Find contact information for the RSC in your area on page 7 of this newsletter.

Video Relay Service (VRS) Providers List

Though many of our faithful readers know that VRS is available through Sprint Relay and Sorenson Relay, they may not be aware that there are other VRS providers to choose from. Here is an update listing of all VRS providers:

ATTVRS

AT&T

Web: www.attvrs.com

Videophone: ATTVRS.TV

Hearing Callers: 1-888-877-9998

CAVRS

Communication Access Center

Web: www.cacvrs.org

Videophone: CACVRS.TV

Hearing Callers: 1-866-500-9662

CSDVRS

Communication Service for the Deaf

Web: www.csdvrs.com

Videophone: CSDVRS.TV

Hearing Callers: 1-800-538-9881

Hawk Relay
Web: HYPERLINK
“http://www.hawkrelay.com”
www.hawkrelay.com
Videophone: dialhawk.com
Hearing Callers: N/A

HOVRS
Hands On
Web: www.hovrs.com
Videophone: HOVRS.TV
Hearing Callers: 877-467-4877

HAMILTON
Hamilton Relay
Web: www.hipvrs.com
Videophone:
HAMILTONVRS.TV
Hearing Callers: 866-498-4777

SPRINTVRS
Sprint
Web: www.sprintvrs.com
Videophone: SPRINTVRS.TV
Hearing Callers: 1-866-410-5787

Verizon VRS
Verizon
Web: www.ip-vrs.com
Videophone: TV.IPVRS.COM
Hearing Callers: N/A

SORENSONVRS
Sorenson Communications
Web: www.sorensonvrs.com
Videophone: 866-327-8877 or
select Dial SVRS on VP100/200
Hearing Callers: 1-866-327-8877

SNAP!VRS
Snap Telecommunications
Web: www.snapvrs.com
Videophone: (dial 711 on Ojo
key pad)
Hearing Callers: 1-866-711-7627

LIFELINKS VRS
LifeLinks
Web: www.lifelinksvrs.com
Videophone: 69.18.207.166
Hearing Callers: 1-877-744-6111

Please note that some VRS providers require establishing a video user profile to obtain a user ID number or personal 800 number. The hearing caller will need to provide the Video Interpreter (VI) either a static (unchanging) I.P. address, ID number or personal 800 number to contact the deaf video user and/or to leave a video message.

Are you hard of hearing?

Do you enjoy working with people?

Use your personal experience to help others
gain access to telephone communication.



We need trainers!

The Telecommunication Equipment Distribution (TED) Program within the DSHS Office of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (ODHH) provides specialized telephone equipment to eligible clients with hearing loss. TED uses Independent Contractors for delivery, set-up and training in the use of specialized telecommunication equipment.

We are looking for trainers in several regions of Washington State.

Rewarding income opportunities available

- Work with the community
- Assess telephone equipment needs
- Empower the hard of hearing community

For more information

- Learn more about the TED program
 - Learn more about the position
 - Request an application
- Please contact: Kelly Robison, TED Program Manager at robiskd@dshs.wa.gov, or call

(800) 422-7930 V/TTY

Office of the Deaf & Hard of Hearing

Toll Free: 1 (800) 422-7930 V/TTY

(360) 902-8000 Direct

Web site: <http://odhh.dshs.wa.gov>

Contact ODHH by Video at:

VP IP Address: 209.181.93.249

VP#: (360) 902-8000

Eric Raff, Directorrafferic@dshs.wa.gov
Robert Lichtenberg, Assistant Director lichtrw@dshs.wa.gov
Ryan Bondroff, IRA Program Manager bondroffryan@dshs.wa.gov
Emily Hill, SLIM Program Manager hillemily@dshs.wa.gov
Steve Peck, TRS Program Manager pecksc@dshs.wa.gov
Kelly Robison, TED Program Manager robiskd@dshs.wa.gov
Colleen Rozmaryn, ACT Program Manager rozmaic@dshs.wa.gov
Claudia Foy, SHS Program Manager foyclam@dshs.wa.gov

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Free Matter
for the Blind
and Physically
Handicapped